SOME

AUTHENTIC PARTICULARS OF THE LIFE

OF THE LATE

JOHN MACNAGHTON, Esq; of *Benvardon*;

Who was Executed in IRELAND,

On TUESDAY the 15th of DECEMBER,

For the MURDER of

Miss MARY ANN KNOX;

Only daughter of ANDREW KNOX, Esq; of Prehen; Representative in the late and present Parliament for the County of Donegal.

Compiled from Papers communicated by a Gentleman in Ireland, to a Person of Distinction of that Kingdom, now residing here.

LONDON,

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BRITISH MUSEUM

SOME

Authentic PARTICULARS, &c.

JOHN MACNAGHTON was deſcended from a Scot's family of that name, which is ſuppoſed to have come over with King William the Third to Carrick-Fergus at the Revolution, and to have ſettled at Benvardon in the county of Antrim, the north-eaſt extremity of Ireland, about ſix miles from Coleraine, and two from Ballymony. The family enjoyed an hereditary eſtate, of about five hundred pounds a year, lived in the higheſt reputation, and was diſtinguiſhed for principles of liberty, courage, and public ſpirit: his father was a magiſtrate of the county of Antrim, where he was much honoured and beloved; his uncle, of the ſame name, who was alſo a magiſtrate, and a cornet on half pay at the time of Thurot's landing, was the firſt gentleman who diſtinguiſhed himſelf upon that occaſion, and appeared in arms at the head of two hundred militia, all ſtout men and well appointed; and his mother was the daughter of Henry Mac Manus, Eſq; alderman of the city of Londonderry.

He was born about the year, 1722; his father died when he was about ſix years old, leaving one other ſon and three daughters. At a proper age, he was ſent to the public ſchool of Raphoe, in the county of Donegal, where he diſcovered a ſtrong and early propenſity to gaming, with a puſilanimity of temper very unſuitable to the circumſtances into which ſuch a propenſity would neceſſarily and frequently bring him: when he was about eighteen

years of age he had a quarrel with Mr. W——n, then his ſchool-fellow, who challenged him to fight; but who knew his diſpoſition ſo well, that when he met him he brought not only a ſword, but a whip, and Macnaghton, notwithſtanding the inſult, had not ſpirit to reſiſt, but ſuffered himſelf to be ſtruck with the whip many times, and then ran away: this diſgrace was not forgot, and he was frequently upbraided with it, particularly ſome years afterwards at the college, where he happened to be abroad on a party of pleaſure, and undertook to drive the coach, in which were ſome young gentlemen who had been his ſchool-fellows: Macnaghton not driving to the approbation of the reſt, one of them called out to him from the coach, bidding him come down and give the whip to W——, whom he knew could uſe it much better: this Macnaghton took as patiently as he had taken the whipping; and indeed it is not ſtrange, that he who could tamely ſuffer the firſt diſgrace, ſhould not be ſtimulated to reſentment by any thing that could follow.

His love of play, at this early age, was ſo predominant, and ſhewed itſelf with ſuch impromiſing circumſtances, that his uncle Macnaghton frequently admoniſhed and reproved him, and at length totally diſcountenanced and rejected him: his grandfather, alderman M'Manus, alſo, who died when he was about fourteen years old, was ſo offended at his diſpoſition and conduct, that though he diſinherited his only ſon, with whom he diſagreed about ſome corporation affairs, and was at a loſs for an heir, yet he overlooked Macnaghton, and left an eſtate, worth about five hundred pounds a year, to his younger brother, who afterwards married a daughter of Mr. Carey, of Iniſhowen, and who is ſtill living, and in poſſeſſion of the eſtate.

From the ſchool of Raphoe he went to Trinity College, Dublin; where he continued till he came of age, and was put into poſſeſſion of his eſtate: from this time

time he began to play very deep. He had a good perſon, a polite addreſs, and by no means a contemptible underſtanding; theſe qualifications recommended him to the notice of the Earl of Mazarine, who introduced him to ſome of the firſt people in the kingdom: by favour of this introduction, he became acquainted with ſeveral perſons who were remarkable for their love of play, and was generally one in parties of the beſt company. In this ſchool he is ſaid to have made a rapid progreſs, and to have purſued his favorite ſtudy with great ſucceſs for about two years; when, being ſtill at the college, and of ſufficient ſtanding, he took his batchelor's degree. He was not, however, long contented to move in ſo narrow a ſphere; he viſited all the public places, both in England and Ireland; he played with leſs reputable company, and for ſtill larger ſums; ſo that in a few years his debts were more than his whole eſtate would pay: ſome of it, therefore, he was obliged to ſell, and to mortgage the reſt; yet his friendſhip and connection with Lord Mazarine enabled him to retrieve his affairs, by marrying a daughter of the late Dean Daniel, to whoſe only other daughter his Lordſhip was himſelf married. The Lady's fortune, however, which was 5000 l. was ſettled to portion their younger children; what remained of Macnaghton's own eſtate was left to deſcend to his heir; and he bound himſelf by a ſolemn oath, never to play again at any game, either of chance or ſkill, except for a trifling ſum at a ſitting; which oath was, by the Lady's friends, made the condition of his marriage.

To this Lady he made a tender and affectionate huſband, and kept his promiſe to abſtain from gaming about two years; but being uneaſy under the reſtraint, he pretended to his wife, that on a certain night he might have won a thouſand pounds, if he had not been tied up from play; and alledging, that opportunities of equal advantage might again offer, he prevailed upon her, and Mrs. Daniel, her mother,

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then a widow, to abſolve him from his oath, which he ſuppoſed to be no longer binding, than thoſe who exacted it deſired it ſhould. In conſequence of this fatal liberty, thus artfully procured, he returned to the gaming table, with yet greater eagerneſs than before; as a ſpring recovers its bent with more violence, in proportion as it is forcibly drawn back. In a ſhort time he was involved in new diſtreſſes, more hopeleſs than the firſt, as his credit was leſs, and many of his reſources were cut off. Several ſuits were now commenced againſt him for large ſums of money: and ſome ſheriff's officers, having a writ to execute againſt him, got intelligence where he was ſpending the evening, and beſet the houſe: he ſtaid till it was very late, and then went into a ſedan chair, in order to go home; the officers did not think proper to ſtop the chair, but followed it till it came to his houſe; but as it was neceſſary they ſhould execute their writ before he went in, as it would be difficult afterwards to get admittance, they came up to him when the chair ſtopped, and told him their buſineſs: Macnaghton declared he would not be atreſted, and the officers proceeding to uſe force, he reſiſted: the ſcuffle that enſued made a great noiſe, and happened unfortunately to be juſt under the window of Mrs. Macnaghton's chamber, who had then lain-in about a fortnight, and was impatiently expecting him home: the noiſe firſt alarmed her, and upon hearing the occaſion of it, ſhe was ſo terrified at the apprehenſions of his danger, and ſo ſhocked at the deſperate ſituation of his affairs, that ſhe fell into a nervous diſorder, which, in a very ſhort time, put an end to her life. Thus one calamity is frequently the cauſe of another; and misfortune, which was at firſt the effect of voluntary miſconduct, becomes intailed upon us by almoſt inevitable neceſſity, in a ſeries of which we can neither break the concatenation, nor diſcover the end.

As Macnaghton was tenderly fond of this Lady, he muſt have been ſenſibly affected by her death, whatever

ever had brought it on; but the bitterneſs of ſelf reproach was now added to grief, as her death was the effect of his own miſconduct, in purſuit of a practice from which ſhe muſt often have diſuaded him with entreaties, remonſtrances, and tears, and to which he returned, after having renounced it by an oath, as the condition of his marriage, under colour of a diſpenſation, obtained by inceſſant importunity, and falſe pretences.

His concern was, indeed, too uniform and laſting to have been diſſembled; yet he ſeemed at length to throw it off by a ſudden effort, and to endeavour to forget, at once, himſelf and his misfortunes, in a perpetual ſucceſſion of gay company, and the faſcinating power of play, which, for a time, abſorbs all the faculties and paſſions, except thoſe only which it employs and excites.

His ſituation, under this appearance of gaiety and amuſement, became every day more truly deplorable, and was, in general, too well known to be diſguiſed with ſucceſs.

The friendſhip of Lord Mazarine, however, did not forſake him, and he was once more furniſhed with a genteel competency, by his Lordſhip's intereſt, who procured for him the place of Collector of the King's taxes in the county of Coleraine, which was an addition of more than two hundred pounds a year to what yet remained of his fortune.

Of this appointment he took poſſeſſion about five years ago; and Mr. Workman, a gentleman of character and fortune, who married his eldeſt ſiſter, and another friend, became his ſecurity in a bond for two thouſand pounds.

His obligations to refrain from play were now multiplied and ſtrengthened to a great degree; he was bound not only by the common principles of prudence and honeſty, but by gratitude to his benefactor, whoſe intereſt procured him his place; and by a point of honour to his ſecurities, who had engaged

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that he would not betray his truſt: yet all theſe obligations were broken as ſoon as they were contracted; he continued to play, he riſked the money that was not his own, he loſt one ſum after another, and in leſs than two years, having embezzled eight hundred pounds of the King's money, the deficiency was diſcovered: he was turned out of his place, and his ſecurities, who had taken the debt upon themſelves by their bond, became liable to pay it.

A man who has violated his point of honour, tho' but in a trifle, is leſs to be truſted than he who has committed crimes in which there is very great turpitude without the breach of promiſe, or the abuſe of confidence: the degree of ſhame already incurred, renders him callous to what may follow; and one of the ſtrongeſt motives to integrity is wanting, when the reward is already precluded. Yet Macnaghton ſtill found a friend, who, in this deſparate ſituation of his affairs, and with this diſgrace upon his character, invited him to his houſe, and offered him the confidence and convenience of his family.

This gentleman was Andrew Knox, Eſq; of Prehen, repreſentative in parliament for the county of Donegal, who had known Macnaghton from his infancy, and whoſe family then conſiſted of his wife, one ſon about eighteen years old, and one daughter about fifteen.

In conſequence of Mr. Knox's invitation, Macnaghton was from this time much at his houſe; but he was alſo ſometimes at Benvardon, Coleraine, Derry, and Strabane: and being much preſſed by his creditors, and in danger of arreſts, he thought proper to ſet up as a candidate to repreſent the town of Coleraine in parliament, without the leaſt intereſt or probability of ſucceſs, but merely as a temporary expedient to obtain new credit and influence, by perſuading the public that he had an intereſt in that place; as he knew it would never be believed, that, without an intereſt, he would offer himſelf as a candidate to repreſent

preſent it: thus was his project rendered ſucceſsful by the extravagance of the meaſure he purſued, and the public deceived themſelves by ſuppoſing that he acted upon rational principles, and would not appear to attempt what he knew it impoſſible to attain.

When the election for Coleraine was made and another perſon choſen, Macnaghton repeated the ſame artifice, by ſetting up for the city of Londonderry, with the ſame view, and with the ſame ſucceſs.

He had, however, at this time conceived a project of much greater importance. Miſs Knox was intitled to a fortune of ſix thouſand pounds by the marriage ſettlement of her parents, and, upon the death of her brother without iſſue, would, as an heireſs, become intitled to an eſtate of above fifteen hundred pounds per annum: Macnaghton, therefore, determined, if poſſible, to marry her, without any regard to the injury he would do the young lady, by involving her in the poverty and diſgrace of a man of ruined fortune and reputation, or to the obligations he owed to the kind and generous friendſhip of her father, making this very friendſhip the inſtrument to perpetrate the moſt cruel wrong againſt him.

He well knew that the ſucceſs of this iniquitous project depended firſt upon his inſinuating himſelf into the favour of Miſs Knox, and then upon his improving this advantage without the knowledge of her father: he had alſo the greateſt reaſon to believe, that whenever he ſhould have made ſuch a progreſs as to propoſe marriage to the lady, ſhe would refer to her father for his conſent, and ſuſpect ſome ſiniſter deſign, if Macnaghton ſhould refuſe to aſk it.

In order to obviate all theſe difficulties, he came frequently to Mr. Knox's at Prehen, and remained there many weeks together: he behaved with the moſt inſinuating elegance and politeneſs to all the family, and took care to expreſs, even in trifling things, a particular attention to the young lady, when it could be done without too much attracting the notice of o-

thers. When this attention has been once obſerved by the perſon to whom it is paid, it may be continued by trifles, which no other eye can perceive: a thouſand alluſions may be made in the moſt general diſcourſe to little incidents, known only to a particular perſon, which will reach not only their notice, but their ſenſibility; and even a look will have a ſignificance and a meaning utterly unknown to the reſt of the company. Theſe arts, with which Macnaghton was well acquainted, he practiſed upon the daughter of his friend, and ſaw himſelf at the ſame time careſſed by her parents; which, though the moſt bitter reproach, he conſidered only as a teſt that they had no ſuſpicions of his deſigns.

He frequently inſinuated, not perhaps ſo much with the hope of deceiving Mr. and Mrs. Knox, as with a particular view to forward his ſcheme againſt the young lady, that his affairs were ſtill in a good way; that his eſtate, though at this time ſequeſtered to make good the deficiency in his accounts with the crown, would yet pay all his debts; that his uncle Macnaghton would ſettle his whole eſtate upon him, amounting to upwards of three hundred pounds a year; and that he ſhould very ſoon be appointed a commiſſioner of the board of works. Mr. and Mrs. Knox were reſtrained by their humanity from contradicting him, by repreſenting his ſituation in a worſe light than his own hopes ſeemed to repreſent it to himſelf; and their ſilence gave what he ſaid all the effect upon the young lady's mind which he intended it ſhould have: he alſo procured his name to be inſerted in the public papers, among the names of other gentlemen who were thought of for the place, to which he pretended he ſhould be appointed; and he took care that ſhe ſhould ſee the liſt, as a confirmation of his pretenſions.

As during his reſidence at Mr. Knox's the young lady was frequently at home, without any companion, opportunities were not wanting to avail

himſelf

himſelf of the prepoſſeſſion he had produced in his favour; he therefore took occaſion to mention his ſuit to her, and though he found that ſhe was not averſe to it herſelf, yet the converſation ſufficiently convinced him, that ſhe would enter into no engagement without the conſent and approbation of her father.

He therefore determined to mention his intention to Mr. Knox, having formed a project of purſuing his deſign, upon his refuſal, with more ſecurity and ſucceſs than before the application; at the ſame time that he had a chance, againſt whatever odds of obtaining his conſent.

In purſuit of this project, he took an opportunity to tell Mr. Knox, that he ſhould think himſelf extremely happy, if he would permit him to make his addreſſes to his daughter. Mr. Knox replied in ſuch terms, as convinced him that this permiſſion would never be granted; and Macnaghton, inſtead of expoſtulating, or repeating his requeſt, intreated Mr. Knox that he would never mention to any one, not even thoſe of his own family, his having once made it; he was ſenſible, he ſaid, of its impropriety, but he hoped the ſecret diſappointment of his wiſhes, would not be imbittered by the reflection that his imprudence and mortification were made known to others. Mr. Knox readily promiſed that he would keep the ſecret; and Macnaghton, on his part, aſſured Mr. Knox, with the moſt ſolemn aſſeverations, that he would take no farther ſtep in the affair.

Such was Mr. Knox's confidence in Macnaghton, that he ſuffered him ſtill to continue in his family, and to have ſtill the ſame opportunities of being alone with his daughter; and ſuch was Macnaghton's perfidy and ingratitude, that he took the firſt opportunity to abuſe this confidence, by a ſeries of the moſt ſubtil and cruel diſſimulations.

He told the young lady, as a ſecret, which he had in vain endeavoured to keep, that he had obtained her

father's conſent to marry her; but that her father had determined to keep it ſecret a year, as well upon account of her youth, as the preſent unſettled ſtate of his (Macnaghton's) affairs: he ſaid, he could not deny himſelf the pleaſure of communicating this to her whom he was ſoon to conſider as his other ſelf; that he was pleaſed to have ſuch an opportunity of ſhewing the confidence he placed in her; and that he had nothing to ask, but that ſhe would not betray him; adjuring her not to drop the leaſt intimation to her father that ſhe had received any notice, not even the moſt remote hint of his intention.

The young lady, who had already a partiality for Macnaghton, and was probably ſecretly pleaſed with what he had told her; being alſo flattered by the confidence placed in her, and having beſides the greateſt reaſon to apprehend that her father would be offended if he ſhould know Macnaghton had diſcloſed what he intended to conceal; and that he might ſo far reſent it as to retract his conſent to their marriage, kept the ſuppoſed ſecret inviolable; and at the ſame time permitted his aſſiduities and addreſſes in private, without reluctance or diſguiſe; being ſeduced into a perſuaſion, that ſhe was only fulfilling her father's ſecret intention, which at the appointed time he would diſcloſe. In the mean time the young lady's ſecurity was increaſed, by the very kind manner in which both her father and mother behaved to Macnaghton, and the very ſtrong terms in which they expreſſed their friendſhip and eſteem for him; Mrs. Knox having ſometimes declared in her daughter's preſence, that ſhe ſhould be glad of ſo pretty a fellow for a ſon-in-law.

Miſs Knox, being thus induced both to admit Macnaghton's addreſſes, and not to mention them to her father, he proceeded from one ſtep to another and at length propoſed, that they ſhould ſolemnly read over the marriage ceremony, as a mutual promiſe

between them, in the preſence of ſome perſon who might be a witneſs to the contract. To this ſhe at length conſented; and having given Macnaghton the meeting very early one morning at Mr. Joſhua Swetenham's in Londonderry, they read the matrimonial ſervice in parts, before Mr. Andrew Hamilton, a young gentleman, then only ſeventeen years old, ſon of Mr. Alderman William Hamilton, late member of parliament, and now an officer of Handaſyde's regiment. He alſo prevailed upon her to kiſs the book interchangeably with him, and ſolemnly to ſwear, that ſhe would be married to him by a clergyman the firſt opportunity; to which, however, ſhe added, as the condition of her engagement, "provided her father would conſent."

Macnaghton was probably much diſappointed by the condition which reſtrained the lady's promiſe to little more than a mere compliance with her father's will, when he ſhould think proper to declare it. He therefore applied himſelf with great cunning and aſſiduity to perſuade her, that what had already paſſed was a real marriage, notwithſtanding the condition, which was not pronounced till after the words which ſubſtituted the contract between them; and that the contract being once made, fully and indefinitely, in the words of the ſervice, could not be limited or reſtrained by any ſubſequent and ſeparate declaration: if he could have ſucceeded in this attempt, he hoped it would be eaſy to compleat the marriage; and that when this was once accompliſhed, eſpecially if the lady ſhould prove with child, the father would, with whatever reluctance, conſent to his taking her as his wife, as the leaſt of two evils.

He found, however, more difficulty in effecting this laſt ſeduction than he expected; and he therefore waited for an opportunity to effect that by force, which he could not accompliſh by fraud; hoping, perhaps, that a little force would ſuffice, and ſecretly flattering

flattering himſelf that ſhe would not be much diſpleaſed to have an excuſe for doing what ſhe might ſecretly wiſh was done; though ſhe would not venture to make it her own free and voluntary act, before ſhe ſhould be juſtified by her father's expreſs approbation.

It happened, that about ten days after the ſuppoſed contract had taken place, Miſs Knox ſet out on a viſit to William Wray's, Eſq; at Ards, about fifty miles diſtant from Prehen. Of this viſit Macnaghton had probably notice, and intended to render it ſubſervient to his deſign upon Miſs Knox's perſon: he accordingly accompanied her in this journey, without being ſuſpected or reſtrained by Mr. or Mrs. Knox; and it being farther than they could conveniently travel in a day, they ſtopped at Strabane, and paid a viſit to John Macauſland, Eſq; at whoſe Houſe, according to a preconcerted plan of the journey, they were to ſpend the night. Whether Mrs. Macauſland had received any caution concerning Macnaghton, or whether ſhe perceived any thing in his behaviour that put her upon her guard, ſhe thought fit to place the young lady in her own dreſſing-room: this precaution greatly diſconcerted Macnaghton, who, in proſecution of his ſcheme, actually made an attempt in the night to get into the room where the young lady ſlept, and failed in his attempt only by its ſituation.

As this attempt was diſcovered by the very circumſtances that prevented its ſucceſs, it is probable that Macnaghton found himſelf under a neceſſity of precipitating his meaſures; for as it was probable in the higheſt degree that Mr. Knox would be told of his attempt at Mr. Macauſland's, ſo it was certain, that from the moment he received ſuch information he would take effectual meaſures to prevent ſuch an attempt from being ever repeated.

The next morning, therefore, he took an opportunity to walk out early with the young lady into Mr. Macauſland's

Macauſland's garden, where having led her into a proper place, he made at attempt upon her perſon, which ſhe repelled with the utmoſt indignation, and which ſhe never forgave.

She returned immediately to the houſe, and ſoon after quitted Mr. Macauſland's, and purſued her journey to Ards. Macnaghton followed her to the country, but not to the houſe of Mr Wray, having no pretence to be received there as a gueſt; and being probably deterred from attempting it by the reſentment of Miſs Knox, who had now ſufficient reaſon to keep him at a diſtance. He continued, however, ſtill in the neighbourhood, hoping that ſome other opportunity might be found to accompliſh his deſign, before it was ſo far diſcovered as to alarm the lady's friends at Prehen.

Between Miſs Knox and Miſs Angel Wray, the daughter of Mr. Wray at whoſe houſe ſhe now was, there had long ſubſiſted a very intimate and tender friendſhip; and Miſs Knox was ſo much affected by the unworthy behaviour of a man for whom ſhe had indulged a tender eſteem, and in whom ſhe had placed the moſt generous confidence, that it affected her looks and her behaviour, which were ſo contrary to her uſual ſprightlineſs, that Miſs Wray, having remarked them, took an opportunity to preſs her with ſo much earneſtneſs and affection to diſcover the cauſe, that ſhe at length wholly unburthened her mind to her; relating all the particulars of her connection with Macnaghton; the ſtory he had told her of having obtained her father's conſent to marry her; his contrivance to get her to read the marriage ceremony with him before a witneſs: his ſubſequent arguments to induce her to act in conſequence of that contract as if it had been a real marriage; his attempts upon her at Mr. Macauſland's; and his having ſtill followed her almoſt to the houſe.

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The intereſt which Miſs Wray took in the dangerous ſituation of her friend, the duty ſhe owed her in return for her confidence, and every other motive of prudence and humanity, induced her to communicate this alarming ſtory to her father.

Mr. Wray, hearing theſe particulars, and that Macnaghton had followed the lady into the country, where he thought it probable he might be ſtill lurking, ſent her back the nex day, under the care of proper attendants, to her father's; to whom he alſo ſent ſome account of his reaſon for ſo doing, which, though in general terms, was ſufficient to put him upon his guard.

When Macnaghton heard of this ſudden and unexpected return of Miſs Knox to her father's, he knew that what happened muſt have been told by the young lady at Mr. Wray's, and that, by the ſame channel, it would come to the ears of Mr Knox: he alſo deſpaired of any farther opportunities of being alone with Miſs Knox, ſo as to accompliſh his purpoſe either by fraud or force; and he alſo knew that he muſt no more be ſeen at a houſe where he had abuſed the moſt generous friendſhip, and attempted the ruin of the moſt unſuſpecting innocence.

He had therefore no reſource but to claim the young lady as already his wife, by virtue of the ſuppoſed contract between them; to bid her and her injured friends open defiance; and endeavour to gain the ſanction of the law to an attempt which was contrary not only to all principles of juſtice, but even to humanity itſelf.

In this ſituation, and with this deſign, he immediately ſet off for Sligo, the reſidence of James Knox, Eſq; brother to Mr. Andrew Knox, and uncle to the young lady, in order to open the affair to him in ſuch a manner as he thought moſt for his intereſt, and by his means to communicate his claim to the family at Prehen.

Mr.

Mr. James Knox, having heard Macnaghton's ſtory, ſet off immediately for Prehen to break it to his brother; but before he arrived his brother had queſtioned his daughter about it, who readily and fully delivered all that had paſſed between her and Macnaghton, ſolemnly declaring, at the ſame time, that ſhe never made any promiſe or contract, of which his conſent was not the expreſs condition. It is probable that the young lady had begun to ſuſpect Macnaghton's ſincerity before ſhe came to this explanation with her father, as his attempts upon her perſon at Mr. Macauſland's were totally inconſiſtent with his profeſſions and pretences; and as this explanation diſcloſed the ſcene of iniquity at once, and ſhewed her the whole ſeries of diſſimulation and fraud, of which ſhe had been made the dupe; ſhe declared that ſhe could no longer think of him without the utmoſt indignation and contempt, and from that time ſhe never ſpoke to him, nor interchanged a line with him to her death.

Macnaghton ſoon after, in proſecution of his ſcheme to recover Miſs Knox by law as his wife, publiſhed a paragraph in the news-papers, purporting that he was married to her, which paragraph was contradicted by Mr. Knox: Macnaghton replied, in an advertiſement, the purport of which Mr. Knox alſo publickly contradicted; and ſeveral other contradictory and menacing advertiſements were publiſhed by both parties, without any other effect, than rendering the affair the object of public curioſity and converſation.

In the mean time Macnaghton chiefly reſided at the houſe of his uncle, Mr. Charles Macmanus, in Londonderry; which being but a little diſtance from Mr. Knox's at Prehen, it was thought prudent to remove the young lady to her uncle's at Sligo, the better to prevent the ſucceſs of any attempt to carry her off by force.

Her uncle, therefore, when he returned from his brother's at Prehen, took Miſs Knox with him to Sligo, whither ſhe was followed in a few days by Macnaghton and his uncle, Alderman Macmanus.

Macnaghton and his uncle arrived at their inn at Sligo in the forenoon, and upon enquiring what company were in the houſe, were told, that, among others, there was John Magill, Eſq; member of parliament for Rathcormick, and commiſſioner of the board of works; a gentleman who had been long a particular friend of Mr. Knox and his family: Macnaghton ſaying, that Mr. Magill was his intimate acquaintance, immediately ſent up his name with his compliments, and that if it was agreeable they would dine together. But whatever acquaintance Macnaghton might before have had with Mr. Magill, that gentleman was too well acquainted with his treatment of Mr. Knox to ſuffer it to continue; he therefore ſent down for anſwer to his meſſage, that he knew not, or, at leaſt, would not know, any ſuch ſcoundrel. This anſwer the perſon who received it, a waiter at the inn, did not deliver in the terms in which he received it; but there was an aukwardneſs in his manner of ſoftening it, which led Macnaghton to think ſomething was diſguiſed, which the fellow, upon being queſtioned, did not deny, yet ſtill could not be brought to diſcover what it was: Macnaghton therefore ſent up his own ſervant to Mr. Magill, and inſiſted upon his bringing the meſſage exactly as it was delivered, which, tho' with much difficulty and reluctance, he did, having received it in the ſame words in which it had been before given to the waiter. Of this inſult, though it was received in the preſence of his uncle, and had been given to two ſervants, Macnaghton thought fit to take no notice, but ſpent the day at the inn, and in the evening went to an aſſembly, which happened to be that night held in the town, with his uncle,

where

where they found a great deal of company; and, among others, Mr. Magill, and Mr. Thomas Knox. Macnaghton, however, expreſſed no reſentment of the affront he had received; and Mr. Magill, provoked perhaps by his ſhameleſs appearance there, as well as diſhoneſty of his conduct, took an opportunity to ſay, in a whiſper, ſo loud as to ſhew he deſigned it ſhould be heard by all who were near him, that Macnaghton was a very great ſcoundrel, and had behaved as ſuch to Mr. Knox and his family; but neither of this did Macnaghton then take any notice.

When the aſſembly was over, Macnaghton and his uncle went back to their inn, and Mr. Magill went home with Mr. Thomas Knox, who, as well as Mr. James Knox, had a houſe at Sligo.

Macnaghton and his uncle ſupped together in company with Mr. Gethings, only ſon of Sir Richard Gethings, a lieutenant in Handaſyde's regiment of foot; and it was then determined that Macnaghton ſhould challenge Mr. Magill that night, and Mr. Gethings, at his requeſt, conſented to be his ſecond. Whether the inſult which he received at the aſſembly, ſo public and ſo groſs, had rouſed him to a degree of anger, by which his natural timidity was ſurmounted, or whether the fear of that general contempt and infamy, which his tamely ſuffering ſuch an outrage would inevitably bring upon him, became on this occaſion ſtronger than the dread of death, cannot be known; but it being now reſolved that he ſhould fight before he ſlept, he ſat up with his company, expecting Mr. Magill's return to the inn, where he had beſpoke a bed, till four o'clock in the morning, drinking only one bottle of claret. About this time Mr. Magill came in, and it being in the month of May, the day was broke: as he had been drinking very freely, he was immediately ſhewed to his chamber, and began to prepare for bed; but before he was quite

undreſſed. Mr. Gethings brought him Macnaghton's challenge, and acquainted him that he was himſelf to be his ſecond. Though a man, who had been drinking freely till four in the morning, muſt certainly engage under great diſadvantage with an antagoniſt, who, with a view to ſuch engagement, had drank only part of one bottle of Claret, yet, as in theſe circumſtances the challenge was ſent, Mr. Magill readily accepted it; and becauſe he would occaſion no delay, by ſeeking at that unreaſonable hour for a ſecond on his own behalf, he at once declared, that he would conſider Mr. Gethings, with whom he had been ſome time acquainted, and whom he knew to be a man of honour, as their common friend. Having made this declaration, and again put on ſuch part of his dreſs as he had pulled off, he walked into a back yard with Mr. Gethings, where they were met by Macnaghton, and having taken their ground, each diſcharged a piſtol againſt the other, and both miſt their aim: they then drew and diſcharged each of them another piſtol, and Mr. Magill had the good fortune, at his ſecond firing, to wound his antagoniſt in the leg, about two inches below the calf, where the ball paſſed clear through between the Achilles tendon and the bone.

Macnaghton, who had adopted the prepoſterous opinion, that all villany is cancelled by the riſk of life in defence of it, and that however great a ſcoundrel a man becomes by betraying his friend, he immediately becomes a man of honour, if, to that injury, he adds an attempt to take away his life, at the hazard of his own; addreſſed Mr. Magill, as ſoon as he found himſelf diſabled, and told him, that he hoped he did not now think him ſo great a ſcoundrel, as he had declared he thought him in the aſſembly-room; to which Mr. Magill, who knew better than to think diſhoneſty could be cancelled by impudence, honeſtly and nobly anſwered, "by G-d but I do", and im-

mediate'y

mediately turning his back upon him, left him to the care of his ſecond.

As he was now no longer in a condition to attempt any thing perſonally againſt Miſs Knox, his continuance at Sligo could anſwer no purpoſe; as ſoon, therefore, as a litter could be procured, and his wound properly dreſſed, he was carried by eaſy journeys through Donegal back to his uncle's at Londonderry, with ſuch affected ſolemnity and parade, as a gentleman who had been wounded in a duel, which he had fought concerning a young lady, that people made no ſcruple to ſay, he valued himſelf not a little on the event; and as it is natural to ſuppoſe, that thoſe have the higheſt opinion of courage, who are moſt ſenſible of the want of it, there is little reaſon to doubt, but that Macnaghton's oſtentation was in proportion to his timidity, and that he reſolved to improve to the utmoſt an advantage which had coſt him ſo dear. He thought fit to expreſs great reſentment againſt Mr. Magill for his parting declaration, and threatened, that he would perſecute him to the laſt: this reſentment, however, evaporated in empty menaces, and he never took any meaſure to obtain what the wiſe and virtuous generation of duelliſts have thought fit to diſtinguiſh by the name of *ſatisfaction*.

Being thus totally diſappointed in his expedition to Sligo, the Knoxes having had timely notice of his arrival there to keep up the young lady, who would otherwiſe, in all probability, have been at the aſſembly; he could only wait for ſuch other opportunities as might afterwards offer.

In the mean time Mr. Andrew Knox, by the advice, and under the direction of Doctor Ratcliffe, a very celebrated civilian, commenced a ſuit in the eccleſiaſtical court of the dioceſe of Londonderry, with a view, firſt to get the contract proved, and then to ſet it aſide by virtue of a late act of Parliament, which

makes

makes all ſuch contracts, with reſpect to perſons under age, ipſo facto, void: but Macnaghton defeated his firſt intention of proving the contract, by keeping Mr. Hamilton, the only witneſs, out of the way, and therefore no pleadings were had in this court on either ſide.

While this ſuit was depending in the eccleſiaſtical court of Londonderry, Mr. James Knox heard that Macnaghton was at Ballybofey, a village in Donegal, not far from Strabane, and had threatened to way-lay him there; upon which he obtained a warrant from Alderman Hog to take him into cuſtody. This Macnaghton treated in a ludicrous manner, and printed and diſperſed a great number of hand bills, in which, he repreſented the warrant as obtained not againſt him but his ſhadow, as he himſelf neither was nor could have been at Ballybofey at the time pretended; this warrant, however, was executed upon him, but it was immediately ſuperſeded, and had no conſequences.

Soon after Macnaghton thought fit to remove the cauſe that was depending in Londonderry court, to the Metropolitan court of Armagh; but with what particular view does not appear, as he ſtill continued to keep Mr. Hamilton from being examined. Mr. Knox, who was in earneſt in the cauſe, and impatient to bring it to an iſſue, removed it from the court of Armagh to a court of Delegates in Ireland, where Mr. Hamilton was obliged to appear and give his teſtimony; and after ſeveral hearings, the contract being proved, was afterwards declared to be void, and Mr. Knox obtained five hundred pounds damages.

After the determination of this ſuit, Macnaghton's affairs became every day more deſperate: he had often been heard to vow vengeance againſt Mr. Andrew Knox, Mr. James Knox, and others of the family; upon which, they obtained Bench warrants againſt him

him of Mr. juſtice Scot; and they had alſo ſued out a writ againſt him, as the foundation of a ſuit to recover the damages which had been awarded in the court of Delegates. From this time, therefore, he appeared no more in public, but ſkulked about the country by ſtealth, and in diſguiſe, ſo that Mr. Knox could never get either the warrants or the writ executed.

In this ſituation was Macnaghton in the month of November, 1760, at which time he came over into England, as he pretended, to lodge an appeal in the court of Delegates here, againſt the ſentence which had been pronounced againſt him in the court of Delegates in Ireland: this, however, was not his real errand, nor did he take any ſteps relating to ſuch appeal.

His journey to England was undertaken for two purpoſes, both terminating in the ſame end; one, was to prevent his being taken into cuſtody at Mr. Knox's ſuit, and the other, was to ſolicit an intereſt to get himſelf returned as member of parliament for the borough of Carrickfergus; which would be a protection to him, and enable him to return, not only with ſafety, but with ſome degree of influence, that might facilitate ſuch farther attempts as he might think proper to make to get poſſeſſion of Miſs Knox's perſon, of which he ſeems never to have loſt ſight for a moment.

Though his acquaintance with Lord ——, to whom he thought fit on this occaſion to apply, was but very ſlight, yet he went to his houſe, without having ſent any previous meſſage, about five o'clock one afternoon ſoon after his arrival in London; and though he was told that his Lordſhip was then at dinner with company, yet he ſent in for him, inſiſting to ſee him upon very particular buſineſs. His Lordſhip was ſo polite as to leave his table and come to him; and Macnaghton then told him, that he came to ſolicit his intereſt for the Borough. Lord ——, who was not

not a little ſurprized at the requeſt, and the importunity with which it was urged, told him, that he had neither eſtate nor intereſt in that country. Macnaghton replied, he knew this to be true, but that his Lordſhip had a prevailing intereſt with thoſe who had both, and it was in this view that he ſolicited his aſſiſtance: his Lordſhip then replied, that his application, however ſupported, was too late; for that the two noblemen who had the principal intereſt there, had already agreed to bring in the brother of one of them, and another gentleman of the country. Macnaghton, however, would not yet relinquiſh his project, but upon Lord ——'s abſolutely declining to do any thing in it, as nothing could then be done without the utmoſt impropriety, he deſired to know where the nobleman was, whom he might himſelf apply to as principal. His Lordſhip replied, that he was at his ſeat in the country; to which Macnaghton then enquired the way, and ſaid he would immediately go down into the country to him. Whether he did or did not take a journey ſo precipitate and unaccountable, is not come to the knowledge of the writer of this narrative; but this incident ſerves to ſhew the general turn and diſpoſition of Macnaghton at this time, and that he had now been ſo "hackney'd in the ways of "men," as to have loſt that elegant ſenſe of propriety, and that dread of incurring any mark of ſlight or diſapprobation, which reſtrains thoſe whoſe ſenſibility of ſhame has not been deadened by repeated violation, from doing what may give occaſion to any behaviour in others, by which that ſenſibility would be wounded.

That he was thus degraded from his original character appears alſo from the next ſtep he took; for a very ſhort time after this interview with Lord ——. he wrote his Lordſhip a familiar billet, deſiring him to let him have fourſcore guineas, as he was by ſome accident diſappointed in his remittances, which he expected

pected every day, and would then return them with thanks.

With this requeſt, which his Lordſhip could not but think unreaſonable and impertinent, he excuſed himſelf from complying, by ſome of thoſe forms of expreſſion which cuſtom has eſtabliſhed to be made uſe of on ſuch occaſions, by perſons who are above treating even improper applications with incivility or reproach.

But Macnaghton, notwithſtanding this refuſal, applied again to his Lordſhip a few days afterwards for a leſs ſum, and by a letter, dated from Kingſton gaol, requeſted that he would lend him thirty guineas. Whether he was really in Kingſton gaol, or whether he only pretended to be ſo, as an excuſe for his application, and an inducement to his Lordſhip to comply, is not certainly known; but it is certainly an inſtance of the meanneſs and incongruity of his conduct, firſt to ſolicit for a ſeat in parliament, then for the loan of fourſcore guineas, and then the loan of thirty, to releaſe him from priſon; it muſt alſo be obſerved, that though when he applied to borrow fourſcore guineas he did it in a familiar manner, pretending that he was in want of money, only becauſe his remittances were accidentally delayed; yet that when he applied for thirty from Kingſton gaol, he did it with an air of diſtreſs, complaining that the expence of the ſuits he had to maintain againſt the Knoxes was the cauſe of his wanting ſuch a ſupply. By the reaſon which he aſſigned for his wanting to borrow thirty guineas, that which he aſſigned when he would have borrowed fourſcore was proved to be fallacious, and nothing more than an attempt to obtain that ſum upon falſe pretences. To this letter, therefore, his Lordſhip did not think fit to return any anſwer, and from that time he was troubled with no farther application.

Whether Macnaghton did after this receive remittances from Ireland, or by what other means he was ſupplied with money, does not appear; but it is certain

 that

that he had money, for he went down to Bath, where he continued ſome time, and was known to play very deep: he play'd however, to all appearance, with ill ſucceſs; for after having returned to London, and continued there a ſhort time, he ſet out for Ireland by the way of Scotland; and in Scotland was ſo diſtreſſed for money, that it is reported he found means to borrow thirty pounds of an Innkeeper upon the road, by pretending an intimacy with Lord ———, who was known to the Innkeeper, by often travelling that road; and that he went ſo far as actually to give the Innkeeper a draught upon Lord ——— for the money.

But however this be, it is certain, that having received intelligence laſt Auguſt that Miſs Knox, with her mother and Mrs. Angel Knox, her aunt, were drinking the waters at Swaddlingbar, he went thither from London in ſo ſhort a time as ten days, though it cannot be leſs than 700 miles.

As it was neceſſary he ſhould not be known, both becauſe he would otherwiſe be in danger of being arreſted upon ſome proceſs at the ſuit of the Knoxes, and becauſe the friends of the Lady, being alarmed, would ſecure her from his attempt, he came to Inniſkilling, which is about eight miles ſhort of Swaddlingbar, diſguiſed like a ſailor, with his hair cut off, and inſtead of it, a cloſe white horſe-hair wig, done up in buckle, ſuch as ſailors on ſhore generally wear, a checked ſhirt, and a kind of looſe watchcoat, tied round with a rope.

Having ſtaid only one night at Inniſkilling, concealed in an obſcure houſe, and hired a poor fellow, who ſubſiſts by running on errands, called Bucky, to go with him as a guide to Swaddlingbar; and having left his horſes and the guide that conducted him to Inniſkilling behind him before he entered the town, that he might be leſs noticed, he proceeded with Bucky to Swaddlingbar on foot. When he arrived he

diſcharged

diſcharged his guide, and hired a bed at a little hut, which in Ireland is called a cabbin, in the ſkirts of a wood very near the wells: in this wood he concealed himſelf during the day, and at night ſlept in the cabbin. In this manner he ſpent three days and three nights: and as the ſkirt of the wood bordered on the public way to the wells, he was continually upon the watch for the young Lady, hoping an opportunity would offer to ſeize her and carry her off; though it is not known that he had any accomplices, aſſiſtants, horſes, or carriage at hand: and he declared, that he was once cloſe by her for above ten minutes, and that ſhe had many times paſſed by the place where he lay concealed behind a hedge, at a conſiderable diſtance from her company, but that the fear of ſurprizing her too much always reſtrained him from appearing before her. What would have been the conſequence of his continuing longer concealed under his diſguiſe in this place cannot be known; but it happened, that on the fourth day after he came to the cabbin, the poor woman who kept it, upon putting away ſome linen which he had left about in the room where he ſlept, felt a ſhirt weigh very heavy, and upon examining it, ſhe found a quantity of powder and ſome piſtol bullets tied up in the ſleeve of it. From this diſcovery, and the rude appearance of her gueſt, the woman concluded that he was a robber, and immediately went with her information to the biſhop of Kilmore, who was then at the wells, and who immediately put up an advertiſement, offering a reward for taking him, and deſcribing his appearance. As ſoon as this came to Macnaghton's knowledge, he went to the Biſhop and diſcovered himſelf, to the great aſtoniſhment of his Lordſhip, and the terror of Mrs. Knox, her ſiſter, and the young Lady.

It unfortunately happened, that a warrant, which would have confined Macnaghton, probably for life in its conſequences, was then in the hands of Mr. Andrew

Knox, the young lady's father, at Londonderry; who, by a moſt unhappy and infatuated ſecurity, ariſing from a preſumption that Macnaghton was ſtill in England, and did not dare to return, had remitted all his precautions, and was entirely off his guard.

As they had therefore no legal power at hand to confine him, Mr. Silver Oliver, a gentleman well acquainted with Mr. Knox and his family, immediately put Mrs. Knox and the Ladies under the protection of Lord Mountflorence, who was then at his ſeat, called Florence-Court, not far diſtant from the wells.

Macnaghton now threw off his diſguiſe, which it was to no purpoſe to wear any longer; and, it is ſaid, was invited to dinner, in company with Mr. Arthur Fleming and ſeveral others, by the Biſhop of Kilmore, to whom Macnaghton was not wholly unknown.

A gentleman, diſcovered in diſguiſe, concealed in a cottage, or a wood, for the love of a young lady, whom her parents only with-hold from his wiſhes, always riſes into new dignity, and is regarded with uncommon ardour of kindneſs, mixed with a kind of pity and admiration, by the multitude, wherever he happens to be: and Macnaghton became ſo popular at Swaddlingbar, after his diſcovery, that having told his ſtory, the common people, if they had not been led to doubt of its truth by contrary reports from reſpectable characters, would all of them have aſſiſted him, at whatever hazard, to carry off the lady.

The next morning Macnaghton, hearing that Miſs Knox, with her mother and aunt, had taken ſhelter at Florence-Court, immediately followed her; and when he came to the end of the avenue that leads to the houſe, he ſent in his compliments, and requeſted an interview with Lord Mountflorence, to whom he was no ſtranger. His Lordſhip, whoſe politeneſs and good nature are well known, came out directly, and expreſſed great concern at ſeeing any gentlemen in that

place

place to whom he could not pay proper civilities. The converſation was very long, and iſſued in a requeſt of Macnaghton to have only one hour's conference with Miſs Knox on any terms, and in any company, which he ſaid was all he wanted. To this his Lordſhip replied, that he would venture to promiſe him ſuch an interview, if he would there give his oath that it ſhould be final and deciſive, and that he would from that time never give any trouble to the young lady or her friends, in diſguiſe or otherwiſe. To this condition Macnaghton would not ſubmit; and his Lordſhip abſolutely refuſing to let him ſee the young lady on any other terms, he requeſted that he might be permitted to ſpeak to her aunt, to whom he alledged he had ſomething to ſay of great importance. To this Lord Mountflorence ſaid he had no objection, if the Lady was willing. and immediately ſending in the meſſage to her, ſhe came out.

His conference with her laſted more than two hours, though, on his part, it conſiſted only of allegations to ſupport the legality of his claim; and on her's, of the moſt bitter, yet juſt, reproaches. When he parted, it is ſaid, he gave my Lord the moſt ſolemn aſſurances, that he would ſet out again for England directly; but ſuch aſſurances, if he gave them, could only be given to conceal his real intentions.

From Florence-Court he went back to Inniſkilling, where he ſtaid two nights, at Mr. Howard's, the White-hart inn; and he avowed his intention to carry off the Lady by force, and made many bloody declarations againſt whoever ſhould reſiſt him.

About this time he found his laſt hope of retrieving his fortune any other way, than by getting poſſeſſion of Miſs Knox, totally cut off; for his uncle Macnaghton, whoſe eſtate he always flattered himſelf he ſhould obtain at his death, as he had till now lived unmarried, and was pretty far advanced in life, being ſcandalized at the infamous conduct of Macnaghton,

ton, and deſirous for that reaſon that his fortune ſhould deſcend to a child of his own, had about two months before married a young Lady, by whom it was probable he would have an heir; and on whom, if he had not, he intended to ſettle his eſtate, at leaſt for her life. This circumſtance is thought to have rendered him altogether deſperate, and at once regardleſs of life, as what could be of no value, if he could not ſucceed in his deſign againſt the lady. When he went therefore from Inniſkilling he reſumed his diſguiſe, under which he had been diſcovered at the wells, and continued ſkulking about at Strabane, St. Johnſtown, Londonderry, Benvardon, Inniſhowen, and ſeveral other places, for about two months. About the latter end of October, knowing that Mr. Knox, of Prehen, would be obliged ſhortly to ſet off from thence for Dublin, to attend the buſineſs of parliament, he cauſed it to be given out, that he was at Benvardon; but on the firſt of November he repaired to the country in the neighbourhood of Prehen, near Londonderry, in the character of a ſportſman, as if to ſhoot game, and aſſumed the name of Smith. He ſet out with no leſs than twelve aſſociates, all of whom deſerted him one by one, except his own groom, one George Mac Dougal, his plow-driver, James Mac Carrel, and one Thomas Dunlap, his tenant.

In this character, with theſe attendants, and under this name, he went to the houſe of Mr. Irwin, which is ſituated on the banks of a conſiderable river, called Burndermit, and is diſtant from Prehen about eight miles, being near the road from thence to Dublin. Mr. Irwin is a gentleman of family, in the hearth-money collection, whoſe known hoſpitality rendered his houſe the common reſort of gentlemen, who came as ſportſmen into that part of the country, who were all welcome, whether he had a perſonal knowledge of them or not.

While he was at Mr. Irwin's, he received intelligence from one of his ſcouts, that Mr. Knox was to ſet out from Prehen on the tenth of November in the morning, and that he would take his daughter and the reſt of the family with him.

As ſoon as he had received this notice, he reconnoitered the country adjacent to the road through which Mr. Knox and his family muſt paſs, in his way to Dublin, to a conſiderable diſtance; and he pitched upon a ſpot on the lands of Cloughean, about a mile from Mr. Irwin's, about a quarter of a mile from the banks of Burndermit, and about three miles from Strabane. This ſpot was thought moſt convenient for his purpoſe, becauſe there are at leaſt ten different avenues to it, by any of which he might eſcape, and becauſe there was a very narrow paſs, through which Mr. Knox's carriage muſt come, between a large dunghill and a cabbin belonging to one Keys, that was alſo under a bank of oak, behind which, as well as behind the dunghill, he or his accomplices might lie concealed till the very moment when the carriage ſhould come up.

Before day-break on the morning of the tenth of November, he repaired to Keys's cabbin with his accomplices on horſeback; bringing with him in a ſack, ſix fire-locks, nine piſtols, with ſeveral ropes, and a long leathern ſtrap, which he declared was to tie Miſs Knox on horſeback behind himſelf or one of his people.

When this horrid apparatus was ſafely lodged in the cabbin, Macnaghton, and thoſe who were with him, took their ſtations, and waited for the appearance of their prey.

Mr. Knox had been told that Macnaghton was lurking about, and that he had declared he would leave nothing unattempted to get Miſs Knox into his hands, throwing out at the ſame time, the moſt terrible menaces againſt any that ſhould oppoſe him:

him : he ſaid he would cauſe a ſcene of blood in Mr. Knox's family, which ſhould make the ears of the child that was yet unborn to tingle ; and that tho' he had begun with a comedy, yet he would end with a bloody tragedy, confirming his menace with an oath. This had determined Mr. Knox to take the young lady with him to Dublin, and to arm himſelf and the ſervants that attended him. His brother, Mr. James Knox, who was alſo at this time with him at Prehen, was to be of the party.

Accordingly Mr. James Knox ſet out in a ſingle horſe chaiſe, with a ſervant behind him on horſe-back; young Mr. Knox, the brother of the young lady, on horſeback, with his ſervant alſo on horſe-back ; Mr. Knox, Mrs. Knox, Miſs Knox and Mrs. Knox's woman, in a coach attended by one Mac Cullough, Mr. Knox's blackſmith, armed with a blunderbuſs, and a caſe of piſtols in his ſurtout coat pocket ; and James Love, Mr. Knox's own ſervant, armed with a fuſee ; Mr. Knox himſelf being alſo armed with a caſe of piſtols in the coach.

Mr. Knox was ſo confident that Macnaghton, notwithſtanding his declarations and menaces againſt him and his family, would not dare to attack him, when he ſaw him attended by perſons properly armed, that neither Mr. James Knox nor young Mr. Knox, nor either of their ſervants, were armed at all ; nor did Mr. James Knox think it neceſſary for him to keep pace with the coach ; he therefore, with his ſervant went on before, and Macnaghton ſaw him paſs by the cabbin, where he was lying in wait about eleven o'clock.

This ſerved them as a ſignal to prepare more immediately for action, as they knew the reſt of the family could not be far behind. At about half an hour after eleven, they ſaw young Mr. Knox and his ſervant on horſeback, both whom they ſuffered to paſs on; and immediately afterwards diſcovered the coach,

coach, at about twenty yards diſtance behind, and cloſe behind the coach, the two attendants who were armed.

As ſoon as the coach had paſſed the door of the cabbin, Macnaghton and two of his accomplices ruſhed out, each armed with piſtols and a gun. Macnaghton preſented his gun at the coachman, and threatened him with inſtant death if he did not ſtop the horſes: the coachman, thus terrified, complied, and Macnaghton's ſervant coming up to him, preſented his gun, and threatened, that if he offered to put his horſes on again, he would ſhoot him. The coach being thus ſtopped and detained, Macnaghton haſted round the horſes heads to the coach door, in order to force out the lady; but Mac Cullough, the blackſmith, coming up to him at that inſtant and preſenting his piece, Macnaghton fired at him, and wounded him in the hand; the fellow however ſnapped his blunderbuſs, but it unfortunately miſſed fire: Macnaghton then fired a ſecond ſhot at him, which wounded him in the knee and the groin, and totally diſabled him: in the mean time Mr. Knox ſnapped a piſtol at Macnaghton from the coach window, but the cock flying off, that miſſed fire alſo. While this was doing, one of Macnaghton's accomplices was charging guns in the cabbin, and handing them out; and Macnaghton having received one from him in the room of another he had diſcharged, advanced upon the fore part of the dunghill oppoſite to the cabbin, towards that ſide of the coach where Miſs Knox ſat, and with his gun preſented fired into the coach, and lodged no leſs than five bullets in her left ſide: he then went round by the wheels to the other ſide of the coach, but as he was going about, James Love, Mr. Knox's own ſervant, fired at his back from behind a turf-ſtack, and lodged three ſwan ſhot in his ſhoulders, Mr. Knox,

at the ſame time firing again from the coach, but without effect. Macnaghton, though he felt himſelf wounded, having got round, received another piſtol from the cabbin, and fired that alſo into the coach, with an intention to kill Mr. Knox, but providentially the ſhot miſſed him. After this Macnaghton and one of his accomplices fired each of them a random ſhot through the coach, probably with a deſign to kill every creature that was in it, for all the guns were loaded with ſwan-ſhot; yet in all theſe diſcharges the poor young lady only was wounded.

After the laſt random-ſhots through the coach, Macnaghton and his accomplices walked off towards Mr. Irwin's, without any apparent concern, and without certainly knowing what miſchief they had done. What became of young Mr. Knox and his ſervant, during the rencounter, does not appear; but it is ſuppoſed that being unarmed, they were kept at bay by the fellow that over-aw'd the coachman; nor does it appear that there was any interchange of words between the parties during the whole time.

As ſoon as Macnaghton and his accomplices were gone off, young Mr. Knox, who was extremely well mounted, rode away to Strabane, about three miles diſtant, where the Londonderry troop of Sir James Caldwell's regiment of Iniſkilling light-horſe were quartered, to obtain their aſſiſtance in the purſuit; as it was to no purpoſe to purſue without aſſiſtance, only Mr. Andrew Knox's ſervant being now armed.

Another perſon was alſo inſtantly diſpatched for a phyſician to the ſame place; and in the mean time the young lady was taken out of the coach, and brought into Keys's cabbin, where ſhe was laid upon ſuch a bed as was there to be found, almoſt drowned in her own blood, crying out, my ſide! my ſide! and calling upon God to put an end to the intollerable

pain

pain ſhe felt from her wounds, by taking her out of the world.

In a ſhort time, doctor Law, a phyſician of great ſkill and humanity, arrived at the cabbin from Strabane; and upon examination found that one of the bullets had broke her third rib, counting upwards, and buried itſelf in her body; that a ſecond had entered her ſide about two inches below her ribs; a third, about two inches below that, but ſomewhat more forward; that a fourth had lodged in the head of her hip-bone; and a fifth ſlightly marked her groin. As either of the three firſt wounds would have been mortal, doctor Law immediately pronounced her beyond all hope of recovery.

She was, however, removed from the place which had been the harbour of her murderers to a decent farm-houſe about a hundred yards diſtant, having been placed for that purpoſe with all imaginable tenderneſs and caution upon a bier. In this houſe ſhe had the accommodation of a more eaſy bed, if any bed could have been eaſy to her, which had been prepared for her reception: here ſhe lay about four hours and a quarter, in great agony, but without uttering either reproach or complaint, only reſigning herſelf to God and praying for her diſſolution, and then died.

In the mean time Mr. Knox returned with a party of the light-horſe, who, though they were three miles diſtant, and had to beat to arms, yet arrived at the place where the murder was committed in little more than half an hour. This party was under the command of ſerjeant Macjunkin, a Fermanagh-man, of known bravery and conduct, who went upon the purſuit as he was directed by the country, taking the rout of Cumberclady and Dungiven, leading towards Antrim; it being thought moſt probable the murderer would attempt an eſcape by that way. He

ſcoured the country on the right and left of this rout to a conſiderable diſtance, but without effect; and that night he lay at Dungiven, which is two and twenty Iriſh miles from Strabane, giving proper intelligence to the gentlemen of the county to ſecure the paſſes and prevent the murderer's eſcape. About ten minutes after this party arrived, they were followed by another, commanded by ſerjeant Caldwell, who immediately ſent them out on a different rout towards Muff, Bally-kelly, and Newtonlemavady, through a circuit of great extent.

Macnaghton, however, had not taken either of theſe routs; but having mounted his horſe, which, with the horſes of his aſſociates, was held for him in a little wood very near Key's cabbin, he made the beſt of his way towards Mr. Irwin's, where he had lain concealed as a ſportſman for a week before the fact; and paſſing the houſe, rode on about a mile farther, where finding himſelf alone, and, as he thought, unobſerved, he diſmounted, and having taken the bridle and ſaddle off the horſe, which was a black one with a good deal of white on his face, which white place Macnaghton had blacked, that the horſe might not be known, he threw both bridle and ſaddle into a ditch, and turned the horſe looſe into a field: he then proceeded on foot to a little diſtance, and came up to the houſe of one Thomas Winſley, a conſiderable bleacher, and without being ſeen by any of the family or ſervants, he found means to conceal himſelf in the hayloft, hoping to remain there till the purſuit for the day was over, and to eſcape to ſome place of greater ſecurity under favour of the night.

It happened, however, that about an hour and a half after the purſuing parties were ſent out, corporal Caldwell, brother to the ſerjeant, and one Reed,

Reed, a private light-horſe man, natives of that country, in their ſearch about the ſpot where the murder had been committed, gained ſome intelligence of the rout he had taken, and even of the place where he lay concealed; but by whom he is ſeen to take ſhelter there, is not known. The two ſoldiers, however, immediately ſet out to take him, and reſolutely entered the hayloft, though it was ſo dark they could ſee nothing that was in it. Macnaghton, who could, notwithſtanding, eaſily ſee them, fired at them from his lurking place, without ſpeaking a word, and they inſtantly returned his fire at a venture, directed in their aim only by the report of his piſtol: it happened that no ball took place on either ſide, and the light-horſemen having no fire in reſerve, immediately drew their broad-ſwords, and being deſirous to take him alive, preſſed forward, hearing at the ſame time the report of another piſtol fired by Macnaghton; but it appeared, that ſeeing them reſolute, and deſpairing to eſcape, he had diſcharged the laſt piſtol at his own head; but the ball having dropped out, it left only the mark of powder upon his ear. Upon this occaſion it would be unjuſt not to commend the bravery of theſe light-horſemen, who ruſhed into a place where they knew a man to be concealed who was armed with piſtols, and whom they could not ſee, though they knew alſo that they muſt at the ſame time be an obvious mark to him; eſpecially if we reflect, that they were not ſtimulated by the hope of any reward, none having been then offered, though there was afterwards five hundred pounds offered for every accomplice: they were indeed ſo ſenſible of their danger, and had yet ſuch an honeſt indignation againſt the murderer, that as they approached the loft, one of them ſaid to the other, "come my lad,

"one,

" one of us muſt fall, but by G—d we will take " the villain ;"——to which the other teſtified his conſent, by immediately entering with his companion hand-in-hand.

Macnaghton, after firing the laſt piſtol at himſelf, was ſeized without farther reſiſtance, about three hours after the fact was committed, and being dragged down from the hayloft, was tied upon a car.

He was dreſſed in an old blue lapelled coat, an old brown wig, a coarſe felt hat, fuſtian breeches, and was without boots; when he was tied on the car, he requeſted ſomething to hide him, in this ſtate of abject ignominy, from the gazing multitudes through which he was to paſs; and he obtained the favour of a meal ſack, in which he muffled up his head, and reſigned himſelf to his fate.

In this condition, and in theſe circumſtances, was Macnaghton; a man deſcended from a family of fortune and honour, eminent for his perſonal accompliſhments, the favourite of ladies, and the companion of noblemen, dragged as a murderer to Lifford gaol; where he was received without having been examined by any magiſtrate, and without any legal warrant having been obtained for his commitment.

His accomplices, after having made the beſt of their way on horſeback to a conſiderable diſtance, quitted their horſes, and took into the mountains, where they knew the bogs and paſſes, and whither no horſe could poſſibly follow them: their horſes, however, fell into the hands of ſome party of the light-horſe that was out upon the purſuit; and ſome time afterwards Dunlap, one of the accomplices, who ſuffered with Macnaghton, was taken in a large meal cheſt belonging to a millar at a place called Bellyboggy.

The next day the coroner's inqueſt ſat on the body of the lady, and brought in their verdict wilful murder

der againſt Macnaghton and his accomplices. The body was then removed in a hearſe to her father's at Prehen, where it lay the ſecond night, and the next day was in a decent but private manner conveyed to the burying place of his family, at Ramullan, in the county of Donnegal.

As it was rumoured that ſome deſperadoes, who had attached themſelves to Macnaghton, intended to attempt a reſcue, Mr. Knox procured an order from the Lord Lieutenant, that a party of the light horſe in whom he could place moſt confidence, might do duty at the priſon where Macnaghton was confined; which being granted, a ſerjeant's guard was poſted in the gaol every night, two of them in Macnaghton's room, but without their arms; and by theſe men he was treated with ſo much regard and tenderneſs, that they might rather be conſidered as his ſervants, and even nurſes, than in any other character.

Notwithſtanding the rumour of a reſcue, Macnaghton obtained the favour of the gaoler not to be fettered, and indeed he was in every reſpect treated with great lenity. From the time of his firſt impriſonment to his trial, he expreſſed no remorſe for what he had done, but gave great attention to the cure of his wounds; two particulars which ſeem equally ſtrange: for ſurely it is ſtrange, in the higheſt degree, that if he did not intend the death of the lady, he ſhould reflect upon having been the accidental cauſe of it, without any appearance of regret or ſorrow; eſpecially, as he muſt have poſſeſſed at leaſt ſome tender regard for a perſon whom he was ſo very ſolicitous to obtain for a wife: and if he did intend her death, in the ſudden fury of revenge or deſperation, it is ſtrange that the ſenſe of guilt ſhould produce no appearance of penitence or remorſe: it is ſtrange alſo, that he who knew

himſelf

himſelf to be reſerved for a public and ignominious death, which, if he ſurvived his wounds, it would be impoſſible for him to eſcape; ſhould not rather hope his wounds might prove mortal than otherwiſe, and oppoſe, or, at leaſt, neglect, every application which might prevent it.

But whatever care he took of his wounds, he totally neglected his perſon, and was totally forſaken by the world. From his firſt entrance into the priſon he refuſed to be ſhaved, and was viſited by no human creature except once by his brother, who did not ſtay with him more than ten minutes, and who then departed without leaving a penny of money towards his accommodation or ſupport, or giving any directions to have proper care taken of him: he was therefore without friends and without money, and ſo far from being able to fee lawyers, he had not ſufficient to procure the neceſſaries of life.

On Monday the ſeventh of December he was ſummoned to his trial at Strabane, when his brother having again been with him, and given fees to ſome perſons of the law to appear for him, a motion was made that his trial might be put off, upon pretence that his wounds and cloſe confinement had prevented him from making preparation for his defence. Upon this the honourable Mr. Baron Mountainy, Mr. Juſtice Scot, and Mr. Juſtice Smith, who were upon the bench, granted him till the Friday following to make ſuch preparation, and bring in ſuch witneſſes, as he ſhould be able.

On Friday the eleventh of December he was brought into court on a bed; dreſſed in a white flannel waiſt-coat, with black buttons and holes, with a black crape about his arm, a dirty party-coloured worſted night-cap upon his head, and a beard of a month's growth.

The

The counſel for the crown were Mr. Pen and Mr. Helen, and for the priſoner Mr. H———n of Strabane. He produced ſeveral witneſſes, but their teſtimony was rather againſt him than for him; yet he behaved with fortitude and reſolution, talked very much, and entered into a long narrative of his affair with Miſs Knox, which was heard by his Judges with great patience and candour, till he indulged himſelf in perſonal reflections and invective, and then he was not ſuffered to proceed. He had a ſtrain of natural eloquence, which, on this occaſion, had a very powerful effect; for it drew tears from the eyes of many, who had a tender regard to the memory of the lady, and a juſt abhorrence of his crime. He ſaid that no man ever loved a woman better than he loved Miſs Knox, and that he had no intention to kill any body, much leſs Miſs Knox; but that he came with a party to carry off a lady whom he conſidered as his wife, and had armed himſelf and his company, only that they might be able to oppoſe force by force, if he ſhould be reſiſted in his attempt: he declared alſo, that he did not fire at the coach till he felt himſelf wounded, and that in the agony cauſed by his wound he neither knew nor cared what he did: but theſe declarations, he ſaid, were not intended to obtain a verdict which might give him life, his only wiſh being now to die, but to clear his character from the imputation of murder. He was alſo very importunate with the court to conſider Dunlap, his accomplice, as acting wholly under his influence in what he did; and ſaid, that as he did not commit any act of violence himſelf, but was only preſent at the action, he hoped they would ſpare his life.

How much of what he ſaid in extenuation of his crime is true, can be known only to God; but it ill agreed with the many bloody declarations he made

againſt Mr. Knox and his family before the fact, and is directly contradicted by two of the witneſſes for the crown, who ſwore, that he cried out ſeveral times, "ſhoot, ſhoot Mary Anne:" and the very night before he was condemned, he again vowed vengeance againſt the family of the Knox's in this world, and, if it ſhould be permitted him, in the world to come.

This trial laſted fourteen hours, and when the jury brought him in guilty, he made them a polite bow, and told them, that they had done juſtice to their country, and acted like honeſt men; as, conſidering the evidence that had been given before them, they could not have acquitted him without perjury. But he again recommended Dunlap to their mercy, who, he ſaid, was a poor ſimple fellow, his tenant, and not intentionally guilty of any crime.

He received his ſentence with an equanimity and compoſure not to have been expected from his character, and very little conſiſtent with his behaviour in other ſituations of danger and diſtreſs, as appears by ſeveral facts related in this narrative. He ſeems by conſtitution to have been very ſuſceptible of fear, and to have had this paſſion ſo ſtrong, that it was ſeldom overborn either by ſhame or anger. Natural courage therefore he had not; and indeed in meer natural courage there is no merit, for it is little more than inſenſibility of danger; and he who is inſenſible of danger has no object for his fear. Courage, as the virtue of a rational being, is that ſtrength of mind by which a ſenſe of danger is ſurmounted; and fear, as a principle of action, over-ruled; by which the ſame conduct is ſteadily purſued under a ſenſe of danger, as would have been purſued without an effort, if a ſenſe of danger had been wanting. This ſtrength of mind Macnaghton ſeems to have poſſeſſed; for though his attempt to force the lady from armed opponents might be reſolved into deſperation; a ſhort

and

and tumultuous ſtate, in which nothing worſe is foreſeen than what is already ſuffered; yet the manner in which he behaved in priſon while death was approaching with ſilent but irreſiſtable celerity, with all the terrors by which he is followed, and to which uncertainty itſelf, perhaps gives new force, can only be reſolved into an effort of mind, which many perſons diſtinguiſhed for natural and inſtinctive courage, have been unable to make. Theſe reflections will, perhaps, enable us to account for his conduct, which at one time appears puſilanimous, and at another heroic. He behaved with a calm and ſedate fortitude from his condemnation to his death; during which time his brother paid him another ſhort viſit, and when he went away, left three guineas with the clergyman of the pariſh of Strabane to bury him and Dunlap his accomplice.

For this clergyman Macnaghton himſelf ſent for after his condemnation, though before, and even at his trial, he talked lightly of religion, and uſed ſome very unbecoming expreſſions with reſpect to a worthy clergyman of the church of England, who had kindly offered him his advice and aſſiſtance.

He had the ſacrament adminiſtered to him at his own requeſt, and received it with great appearance of devotion.

It is certain, that whatever were the moral defects of this man's character, he had many popular good qualities; which, with the advantage of his perſon and addreſs, gained him the general good will of the lower ſort of people, which was not leſſened even by the fact for which he died. They were wholly ignorant of the ingratitude, diſingenuity, and diſſimulation, of his practices, to ſeduce the young lady into that contract which he pretended gave him a right to her perſon: they conſidered his endeavour to get her into his poſſeſſion, as a gallant and ſpirited attempt to do himſelf juſtice; and the death of the young lady, as the acci-

dental effect of an unjuſt reſiſtance made againſt that attempt by thoſe, who, by ſuperior power and influence, would have overborne right.

Theſe notions, however erroneous and extravagant, had taken ſuch poſſeſſion of their minds, that there was not a carpenter to be found in all the country about Strabane that would erect a gallows for his execution; nor could any other perſon be procured to undertake it for hire.

The ſheriff therefore, was obliged to look out for a tree which might ſerve for the purpoſe; and upon a tree he muſt at laſt have been executed, if the uncle of the unhappy young lady, and a party of gentlemen, who were moved with a juſt indignation at the thought of being reduced to the neceſſity of ſuch an expedient, to execute a wretch who had committed a murder with every poſſible aggravation, had not themſelves made a gallows and ſet it up.

It was erected on a plain between Strabane and Lifford; and on the fifteenth day of December, about one o'clock in the morning, Macnaghton, who had been fettered upon his condemnation, was brought down from his room in the priſon, in order to have his fetters taken off; but there was not a ſmith to be found that would do it: and if one of thoſe who had refuſed the office had not been compelled by a party of the light-horſe to perform it, the criminal muſt, contrary to law, have been executed with his fetters on; and the ſheriff was obliged to ſend for the executioner, a very old man from Cavan.

Every thing, however, being at laſt ready, he was carried to the place of execution, dreſſed in a very ſlovenly manner, and in the very coat which he wore when he committed the murder; declaring but for what reaſon cannot be known, that he would wear no other.

He appeared neither intimidated nor confuſed, but told the ſheriff, that though it was expected he ſhould

make

make a ſpeech, yet he never intended it, and deſired he would make that declaration in his name. He then enquired whether his head was to be ſtuck up on the goal, and ſeemed much comforted when the ſheriff aſſured him it was not. He told ſome of his proſecutors, who were preſent, that he forgave them, but he did not aſk forgiveneſs of any. After a ſhort time he aſcended the ladder, and when the old executioner was about to put the halter round his neck, he took it out of his hand and put it round his neck himſelf: he then went up to the very top of the ladder, and threw himſelf off with great force, hoping the ſudden jerk would have diſlocated the Vertebra of his neck, and, by wounding the ſpinal marrow, have put an end to his life in a moment; but, on the contrary, the rope broke, and he fell to the ground. The ſpectators, when they ſaw him drop, imagined it to be the effect of ſome contrivance for his eſcape, and immediately favoured it as much as in their power, by running away and leaving the place open: he was, however ſoon aſſiſted to riſe by the executioner and other officers that ſtood near the gallows; and notwithſtanding the ſurprize and pain of the ſudden ſtraitening the ligature round his neck, and the fall, he did not appear to be in the leaſt diſconcerted. He reaſcended the ladder with great calmneſs and compoſure, declared what had been his motive for leaping from the ladder with ſuch violence; and obſerved that the late Lord Ferrer's remark was juſt, that the anticipation of death was much worſe than death itſelf. As Dunlap, his accomplice, was not yet executed, the halter was taken from his neck and put round that of Macnaghton, inſtead of his own which had been broken: he then ſuffered himſelf to be turned off the ladder as uſual, and after a few involuntary ſtruggles, expired.

In about ten minutes the broken halter being mended, Dunlap was executed in that; and after the bodies had

had hung ſome time they were taken down, and the heads being cut off, they were, with the heads both buried together, in one grave behind the church of Strabane.

Thus died John Macnaghton, a gentleman by deſcent, education, and fortune; adorned with every elegance of perſon and manner; received among the greateſt as a companion, and among the beſt as a friend, even when his circumſtances were ſuch as have often baniſhed friendſhip from merit, and expoſed genius to contempt. It may, perhaps, be of ſome importance to mankind to remember, that this perſon fell a ſacrifice to gaming, that accurſed vice, which, without the allurements of ſenſual pleaſure, ſeduces the avaritious and the idle, from the paths both of competence and of peace; a vice, by which every generous ſentiment is gradually eradicated from the heart, the ſenſe of honour quenched, and a ſtate of chearful independence exchanged for the conſcious anguiſh of ſplendid poverty, which of all conditions, is the moſt wretched, as including all the habits of wealth with all the inability of indigence. In this ſituation, mean artifices and expedients, by being often practiſed, become at length habitual; and when theſe have been too often practiſed to ſucceed, which muſt ſoon happen after they are once practiſed without repugnance, univerſal dereliction and contempt precipitate the wretched outcaſt upon ſome daring violation of the laws, and guilt itſelf becomes the only refuge of deſpair.

As publick curioſity is always excited with reſpect to the perſons of thoſe who have been remarkable either for virtue or vice, for proſperity or misfortune, it will be ſome gratification to the reader to know, that Macnaghton was in the thirty-ninth year of his age, that he was five feet nine inches high, that his make was ſtrong but not heavy, his complexion florid, his features regular, his noſe aquiline, his eyes expreſſive

preſſive and ſparkling, his aſpect pleaſing, and his hair of a dark brown.

Miſs Knox was of a middling ſtature, and very elegantly formed, her hair was light, with an agreeable tendency to the golden hue, ſerving only to enliven her complexion, which nothing could exceed; her features were extreamly regular; and there was a mixture of the tender and the ſprightly in her countenance, which is but ſeldom ſeen; it was indeed expreſſive of that mildneſs and affability, which ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed her character.

The writer of this narrative has only to add, that he has faithfully related facts, not only eſſentially, but circumſtantially, as they were repreſented to him by perſons of character.

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